

DRAFT MINUTES

TALBOT COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MONTHLY MEETING

July 6th, 2015

I. ROLL CALL

The regular monthly meeting of the Talbot County Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 3:00 PM on Monday, July 6th, 2015. Those members in attendance were Mr. Ward Bucher, Chair; Mrs. Marsha Kacher, Mr. Robert Amdur, Mr. Ronald Mitchell, and Dr. Dorothy Fenwick. Representing the County was Mr. Jeremy Rothwell. Also present were Mr. Robert Wilson, Mr. Stuart Wilson, Ms. Shelby Mitchell, Mr. Christian Berg, and Ms. Jennifer Sparenberg.

II. CURRENT BUSINESS

- A. REVIEW MINUTES OF THE June 1st, 2015 MEETING - The minutes of the meeting on June 1st were reviewed. Ms. Marsha Kacher pointed out three corrections to the draft minutes as presented. Mr. Ronald Mitchell moved to approve the minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Ms. Marsha Kacher and unanimously carried.
- B. UPDATE ON STAFF ASSIGNMENTS – Mr. Jeremy Rothwell explained that Mr. Daniel Brandewie has resigned from his position as Assistant Planning Officer as of June 19th. He noted that he will discuss with the Planning Officer, Ms. Mary Kay Verdery, the long-term staffing of the HPC going forward in the coming weeks.
- C. UPDATE ON THE SURVEY OF EASTERN VILLAGES – Mr. Jeremy Rothwell gave a brief summation of what has occurred thus far. Specifically, he noted that Ms. Elizabeth Beckley accepted the terms and conditions of the contract, which she signed prior to the June 30th deadline. The contract has been filed with the Department of Finance, which has processed and dispersed a check in the amount of \$4,500 (consisting of FY 2015 funding). The remaining \$4,500 will be dispersed to Ms. Elizabeth Beckley upon the completion of the survey of required structures. Mr. Ward Bucher and Mr. Ronald Mitchell asked that Ms. Beckley come in at either the August or September HPC meeting to give a status update on the project. Mr. Jeremy Rothwell noted that the terms of the contract stipulated a status update by the vendor at some time in early Fall, and that he would contact Ms. Beckley to arrange for her to come give a progress report in the near future.
- D. RECOMMENDATION OF MILLER'S HOUSE (T-70) TO TALBOT COUNTY HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT – Mr. Jeremy Rothwell passed out copies of the photographs taken from the site visit on June 24th, and gave a brief overview of the history of the house and property. He explained that the house was constructed sometime prior to 1770, and is a three bay, single pile two and one half story brick dwelling laid in Flemish bond. The dwelling and property has been documented by Michael Bourne for the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP), and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1999. Mr. Ward Bucher questioned as to what role and what findings the HPC is required to make and/or recommend to

the County Council. Mr. Jeremy Rothwell explained that in accordance with the Talbot County Code 190-108, the HPC only has to determine that the subject property/structure(s) is of “local, state, or national historic or architectural significance.” Additionally, new applications to the Historic Overlay District are required to follow the process for zoning map amendments as set forth in 190-174, but on the other hand is not subject to meeting the specific warrants laid out in this section of the Code. Mr. Ward Bucher gave additional background information about the property, emphasizing that the dwelling was constructed by Edward Lloyd III to provide housing for the nearby Wye Mill, which is among the earliest industrial complexes in Talbot County and the entire Eastern Shore. He explained that subsequent owners of the property constructed three wings onto the house, which were eventually demolished in the mid-twentieth century. In addition, he noted that the entire 1.86-acre property, including the Hopkins Family Cemetery, will be included in the Historic Overlay District. Mr. Ronald Wilson then spoke, remarking that he has more than thirty years of experience in the stabilization and restoration of historic homes and structures. Most recently, he has completed the restoration efforts of the Providence Plantation in Centreville, MD. His goal for throughout the project is to continue to stabilize the dwelling, provide a new well and septic system, and get the bulk of the “bull work” completed to make the dwelling habitable. To date, Mr. Wilson explained that he has already started work on the project since taking ownership of the property in April, and has completed the restoration of the living room fireplace. Next, Ms. Shelby Mitchell from Historic Easton, Inc. spoke in support of the project, and explained that Historic Easton, Inc. unfortunately did not have the financial resources to complete the stabilization work, but that this was an excellent opportunity to do so. After brief discussion, Ms. Marsha Kacher makes a motion that the Talbot Historic Preservation Commission enthusiastically recommends to the Talbot County Council and Planning Commission that the dwelling known as the Miller’s House, located at 14256 Old Wye Mills Road, Wye, MD (Tax Map 1, Tax Parcel 4), be locally designated as a Historic Overlay District. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ronald Mitchell and was carried unanimously 5-0 by the Talbot Historic Preservation Commission.

Mr. Jeremy Rothwell explained that as a zoning map amendment, the applicant is required to pay a \$500 fee, which can be waived by the Talbot County Council. Since the applicant is voluntarily placing restrictions on their property (as opposed to gaining greater density etc.), Mr. Rothwell suggested that the Talbot Historic Preservation Commission send a separate letter of support to the County Council requesting that the \$500 zoning map amendment fee be waived. Mr. Ronald Mitchell makes a motion for a letter to be drafted and sent to the County Council requesting that the \$500 zoning map amendment fee be waived for the designation of the Miller’s House as a Historic Overlay District. The motion is seconded by Dr. Dorothy Fenwick and carried unanimously in a vote of 5-0. Mr. Jeremy Rothwell stated that he would draft a letter for Mr. Ward Bucher to sign by the end of the week.

III. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Marsha Kacher recommended that the agenda be rearranged so as to allow Mr. Christian Berg and Ms. Jennifer Sparenberg to go first with their projects. After discussion the HPC decided to rearrange the order as follows:

- A. CLAY'S HOPE SIX-TO-FIX GRANT APPLICATION – Mr. Christian Berg, who owns Clay's Hope (T-189), an historic plantation just outside of Bellevue, is interested in applying for the "Six-to-Fix" grant program being offered through Preservation Maryland. He explained that the grant application was released on June 20th with a deadline of July 20th. He passed around literature about the grant program, which is in its first year, and has a purpose of providing funding to threatened properties and structures. As required by Preservation Maryland, each application must be nominated and supported by a government agency or approved non-profit organization. Specifically, Mr. Berg requested that the Talbot County Historic Preservation Commission support the nomination of the tobacco barn at Clay's Hope. He explained that it is the last known tobacco barn on the Eastern Shore, and is potentially the oldest in Maryland. Mr. Berg stated that the grant could be used for the following three purposes. First, the grant funding could be used to date the barn, since the structure has never been formally tested and dated. Secondly, the grant could be used to complete an engineering study and structural analysis to determine the most effective means of stabilizing the barn, whose foundation is deteriorating. Thirdly, the grant could be used to fund the actual stabilization of the barn. Mr. Berg explained that he has already completed more than \$80,000 worth of repairs and stabilization work on the barn, but needs further assistance. Mr. Jeremy Rothwell noted that he would have to get permission from the County Manager's Office before applying for the grant on behalf of Mr. Berg. Mr. Ward Bucher stated that this would be an excellent opportunity of the Talbot Historic Preservation Commission to reward those landowners who voluntarily designated their properties as a Historic Overlay District. Mr. Ronald Mitchell makes a motion for staff to apply for the Six-to-Fix grant program, pending approval from the County Manager, for the tobacco barn at Clay's Hope by the July 20th deadline. The motion was seconded by Marsha Kacher and carried unanimously in a vote of 5-0 by the HPC.
- B. MHT CULTURAL RESOURCES HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM – Ms. Jennifer Sparenberg from Maryland Historical Trust gave a brief overview and Power Point Presentation regarding the new Cultural Resources Hazard Mitigation grant program being offered by MHT. She explained that this is a one-time grant opportunity, funded through FEMA, to identify and/or mitigate for historic structures threatened by natural hazards. The deadline for application is September 30th, with awards up to \$35,000. She notes that funding can be used to document historical resources, although they must be formally incorporated into the County Emergency Management Plan. Mr. Jeremy Rothwell passed out a series of maps of the waterfront villages and explained that some villages have been thoroughly documented, while others like Tilghman have only been sporadically documented, and Newcomb, which has not been documented at all. Mr. Ward Bucher recommended that the HPC narrow the scope of the survey since \$35,000 will not go very far towards surveying of historic resources. Mr. Jeremy Rothwell noted that he would follow-up this conversation with Jim Bass, Emergency Planner for Talbot County and Mark Cohoon, GIS Coordinator, to ascertain what is the most appropriate steps forward for this grant opportunity.
- C. NEXT SITE VISIT - Mr. Robert Amdur noted that Rich Neck Manor near Claiborne is next on the list to be inspected. The site visit has been scheduled for Monday, July 13th at 3:00 pm. Mr. Robert Amdur will send out directions to the site by the end of the week, while Mr. Jeremy Rothwell will send out a copy of the most recent site visit report.
- D. DOCUMENTATION OF HISTORIC DWELLING ON LANDS OF ARTHUR FOSTER, III – In following up from the motion made at the June HPC meeting, Mr. Jeremy Rothwell stated that he went out the site with Elisa DeFlaux from the

Department of Planning and Zoning, and took photographs and measurements of the dwelling to be demolished. He explained that he will use this information to draw up floor plans of the dwelling, and complete the required documentation through the standard Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP) form. Mr. Rothwell noted that he will hopefully be able to present the completed form to the HPC by their August meeting.

OPEN FLOOR – Mr. Robert Amdur explained that he recently attended the July Planning Commission meeting last Wednesday where the Planning Commission unanimously in a vote of 5-0 made a recommendation to the County Council against Bill 1305 as proposed. Mr. Jeremy Rothwell gave a brief overview of the legislation, noting that it was intended for it to apply to existing commercial and industrial sites over five acres in size, although he admitted that the legislation is vague in defining “existing development” etc. Mr. Ward Bucher stated that this legislation could significantly endanger historical structures, resources and landscapes since it would bypass many of the existing safeguards. Mr. Robert Amdur made a motion to draft a letter to the County Council recommending against the adoption of Bill 1305 as proposed. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ronald Mitchell and carried unanimously in a vote of 4-0 by the HPC. So as not to put staff in an awkward position, Mr. Robert Amdur volunteered to draft a letter, which he will email to the HPC before sending it up to the County Council.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be on Monday, August 3rd 2015 at 3:00 pm in Conference Room One of the Talbot County Office Building at 215 Bay Street in Easton.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 4:30 pm.